Amendment in the Indian Telegraph Act

1903. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
DR. T SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Indian Telegraph Act to facilitate mobile operators roll out networks in rural areas for sharing infrastructure *i.e.* funded by the Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund;

(b) whether Government have already discussed the matter with USO Fund administration and has worked out the details;

(c) whether amendment to Telegraph Act is necessary to accommodate the basic cellular and other wireless technologies;

(d) whether the main purpose is to construct towers in rural areas, so that, cellular and CDMA lines can reach villages; and

(e) if so, by when Government are likely to amend the Indian Telegraph Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Based upon the recommendations of USO Fund Administration, Government proposed to amend the Indian Telegraph Act to facilitate the expansion of telecommunication services in rural and remote areas by Unified Access Service, Basic Service and Cellular Mobile Telephone Service Licensees.

(c) and (d) The proposed amendment of Indian Telegraph Act will facilitate expansion of telecommunication services in rural areas by way of creation of infrastructures such as construction of towers by Cellular, Basic and Unified Assess Service Licensees.

(e) Inter-Ministerial consultation has already been initiated to amend the Indian Telegraph Act.